

Minutes of Port Commission Meeting
March 26, 2026
In Person & Videoconference

A Regular Meeting of the Port Commission of Port Freeport was held March 26, 2026, beginning at 1:00 PM at the Administration Building, 1100 Cherry Street, Freeport, Texas.

Commissioners present in person:

Mr. Rob Giesecke, Chairman
Mr. Rudy Santos, Vice Chairman
Mr. Kim Kincannon, Secretary
Mr. Dan Croft, Asst. Secretary
Ms. Barbara Fratila, Commissioner

Staff Members Present:

Ms. Heather Cook, Randle Law Firm
Ms. Phyllis Saathoff, Executive Director/CEO
Mr. Rob Lowe, Director of Administration/CFO
Mr. Jason Hull, Director of Engineering
Mr. Chris Hogan, Director of Protective Services
Mr. Jason Miura, Director of Business & Economic Development
Mr. Brandon Robertson, Director of IT
Mr. Jesse Hibbetts, Director of Operations
Ms. Missy Bevers, Executive Assistant
Ms. Amy O'Brien, Controller
Ms. Christine Lewis, Safety Coordinator
Ms. Amanda Veliz, Public Affairs Manager
Ms. Vicki Smith, Accounting Manager
Mr. Chas Gryseels, Project Engineer
Mr. Clinton Woodson, Sales Manager
Ms. Danielle Allen, Procurement Manager (virtual)
Ms. Emily Henderson, Sales and Marketing Specialist (virtual)
Ms. Ruby Dunn, Receptionist (virtual)
Ms. Tricia Vela, Public Affairs Assistant (virtual)

Absent:

Mr. Ravi Singhanian, Commissioner

Also, present:

Mr. Chris Moore, Texas Port Ministry
Mr. Jason Foltyn, GFT
Ms. Kelsea Hielbert, BFS
Ms. Melanie Oldham

1. CONVENE OPEN SESSION in accordance with Texas Government Code Section 551.001, et. seq., to review and consider the following:
2. Invocation – Mr. Chris Moore – Texas Port Ministry.
3. Pledge of Allegiance – U.S. Flag and Texas Flag

4. Roll Call – Commissioner Giesecke noted that Commissioner Singhania was absent while all other Commissioners were present in the Board Room.
5. Safety Briefing – Ms. Christine Lewis spoke on driving in seasonal weather.
6. Call to identify and discuss any conflicts of interest that may lead to a Commissioner abstaining from voting on any posted agenda item.

There were no conflicts identified.

7. Public Comment – Ms. Melanie Oldham addressed the Port Commission regarding concerns of Freeport residents.
8. Public Testimony – There was no public testimony.
9. Receive reports from Executive Staff on activities and matters related to administrative affairs, financial results, facility engineering matters, operations and vessel activity, safety matters, security matters, tenant updates, USCOE, and other related port affairs.

A. Executive Director/CEO

Ms. Saathoff first reported that operations at the port remain steady with a 4.7% increase in vessels calling the port (YTD). Revenue is in line with budget while expenses are slightly under. Operating net income is ahead of budget. Staff continues to monitor the overall tonnage noting the uncertainties from recent activities around the world. Overall port-wide tonnage is up. She also reported that Freeport LNG has an upcoming scheduled maintenance that will run through May and June so the port will see a dip in LNG volumes during that time. She stated that in looking at containerized imports into the U.S. there were decreases in all but one of the top 10 ports in the U.S. She noted the Panama Canal is currently benefiting from the war in Iran with more transits of LNG carriers through the canal. Work continues on the Freeport Harbor Channel Improvement Project as it nears completion. The port will host the executive leadership team meeting on April 7 along with a visit by Colonel Dake who will tour the port. Lastly, she reported that the Supreme Court ruled on the tariffs saying that some of them were not legally implemented and therefore would be eligible for refund. The lower courts directed CBP to put in a mechanism to make that happen which is supposed to take about 45 days. Staff is following up with legal counsel to ensure this is an appropriate avenue to pursue and will continue to monitor. Ms. Veliz gave an update on the Take-a-Child Fishing Tournament stating the port has secured 60 generous sponsors with almost \$60,000 raised for the event. She stated that the first, second and third place winners for the logo contest were recently awarded and noted the contest brought in 268 entries with the Boys and Girls Club submitting the most entries. She also stated that the Captain's Dinner will be held May 7 with the tournament being held May 9. Ms. Veliz also shared a short recap video from the ribbon cutting held last month for the Area 5 and 5th Street projects. Ms. Saathoff noted that the Area 5 project was funded by Port Maritime Infrastructure Program and the improvements associated with 5th Street, 8th Street, Terminal and the access road from 2nd Street back to FM 1495 for the community and the truck parking area for trucks waiting to get inside the secure facility were partially funded through the Rider 37 and Seaport Connectivity grant programs. She also noted that the Gate 4 project was also partially grant funded.

B. Director of Engineering

In addition to his written report, Mr. Hull noted that the Ellis Island is still dredging out in the channel and hopes to have a completion date at the next meeting. He also shared a photo of the Gate 4 widening project noting that contractors are currently striping the concrete. The project is substantially complete, and Mr. Hull will present a deductive change order for the project later on the agenda. The FM 1495 TxDOT project continues to progress.

C. Director of Operations

Mr. Hibbetts reported on statistics for February, noting the consistency in the number of vessels and number of lay days each month with 528 total vessel calls port wide. Tonnage is up in every category across bulk, LNG, steel and Ro/Ro with project cargo slightly down. Total vehicles handled YTD is 76,684 and total containers handled is 37,847 which equals 75,663 TEUs. Rail has been very consistent from October to February thanks to the new OEM rail service on Parcel 14. Insight to March shows its shaping up to be another good month across each sector of business. Mr. Hibbetts also announced the 4th Annual RO/RO Rodeo will be held May 5.

D. Director of Business & Economic Development

Mr. Miura reported on recent attendance at the Trans-Pacific Maritime Conference in Long Beach and the Seafood Expo in Boston. He also gave an update on Cross Dock 2 stating that plans are near completion and being reviewed by CBP. Pending their review, the final plans will then go to code review during April and put out to bid in May. He also reported that the trucker page on the website has been updated. He explained that any trucker can access the page by desktop or mobile device and shows a map with various buttons that indicates how to access the port. He noted that the blue button is for port access, yellow button is for freight routes, and the red button is for hazardous routes. Additionally, the map also includes pins with addresses for all of the port gates, the non-TWIC truck queuing area and the truck parking lot. Mr. Miura added that it's a very beneficial tool, not only for truck drivers, but for the community.

E. Chief Financial Officer

Mr. Lowe presented the financial results for the month of February.

10. Receive reports from Commissioners on matters related to Port Commission-related meetings or conferences, Port presentations and other Port-related matters.

March 18 OSS Committee Meeting – Commissioner Santos reported the committee discussed few items that are on the agenda for consideration, portable generator a top pole switch, both receiving a positive recommendation for approval. The committee also received an update on the crane spare parts which are expected to arrive April 10 as well as an update on Port security grant video and enhancement project.

March 24 Finance Committee Meeting – Commissioner Croft reported the committee discussed two items that are on the agenda for consideration, the Goodman Corporation proposal and a possible resolution authorizing an Advance Funding Agreement with TxDOT.
March 24 ESGS Committee Meeting – Commissioner Fratila reported the committee received an update on the EPA grant which had an initial kick off meeting March 10. Commissioner Fratila noted that once the quality assurance plan is approved by EPA, they will proceed with four other components of the grant that include emissions inventory, electrical feasibility,

resiliency planning and community workforce planning. The project is projected to be complete by April 2027. The committee also received updates from IT on training requirements and the procurement manager on community outreach.

Commissioner Croft reported attending the Brazoria County Economic Alliance quarterly meeting, Port committee meetings and the TPM (Trans-Pacific Maritime) Conference.

Commissioner Fratila reported attending the AAPA Legislative Summit in WDC.

Commissioner Santos reported attending the Angleton Chamber Luncheon.

Commissioner Kincannon reported attending the Port Ministry Banquet, the Grande Marocco Responder Tour, BCCA meeting and the OSS Committee meeting.

Commissioner Giesecke reported attending the Alvin Soroptimist Men Who Cook dinner, Friends of the River Breakfast, BCCA and Angleton Chamber Luncheon.

11. Consent Agenda.

- A. Approval of Minutes from the Regular Meeting held February 26, 2026.
- B. Approval of financial reports for the period ending February 28, 2026.
- C. Approval of credit card issuance and credit limit for Procurement Manager.

A motion was made by Commissioner Croft to approve the consent agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Kincannon with all Commissioners present voting in favor of the motion.

12. Approval of Change Order No. 1 for the Gate 4 Access Project.

Mr. Hull stated that the change order removes the scope of work for paving that the TxDOT contractor performed; therefore, the port's contractor, Harper Brothers, does not need to perform the same amount of work and subsequently, staff is requesting a reduction in the Harper Brothers contract amount by \$188,383.02. Mr. Hull recommends approval.

A motion was made by Commissioner Santos to approve the change order. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Croft with all Commissioners present voting in favor of the motion.

13. Approval to purchase a portable generator, for the amount of \$125,000, to be cost-shared through the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program: Port \$16,775.00 and Federal \$108,225.00.

Mr. Hibbetts stated that in 2021 the port was awarded funds through the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program for Hurricane Laura which was a 90/10 split. Worldwide Power came in with the lowest bid of \$125,000 for a John Deere EPA Tier 4 diesel powered engine with a Samford 200 kw generator. He stated that the Texas Department of Emergency Management approved the purchase because it is over the amount of the grant and noted the port will pick up the difference. Mr. Hibbetts stated that staff reviewed this with the OSS Committee and requests approval to purchase the new generator in the amount of \$125,000. It is a reimbursement program; therefore, the port will make the purchase, then be reimbursed

\$108,225 through the grant program with the port's portion totaling \$16,775 which includes the difference.

A motion was made by Commissioner Santos to purchase the portable generator as recommended. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Croft with all Commissioners present voting in favor of the motion.

14. Approval of the purchase and installation of a receiving pole with poletop switch, for an amount not to exceed \$40,809.20.

Mr. Hibbetts stated that CenterPoint is rerouting circuit connections in Parcel 1. The circuit that comes into the port is on the north fence line near the Dole yard and services a good portion of the port. Staff discussed this with the OSS Committee explaining that the port's new fiberglass receiving pole and poletop switch will be downstream from CenterPoint's meter. The fiberglass receiving pole will harden infrastructure and improve resiliency during storms. Staff received quotes from two vendors with ICS submitting the lowest bid. Staff is requesting approval to purchase and install the new fiberglass pole for the amount of \$40,809.20.

A motion was made by Commissioner Santos to accept the recommendation by staff for the purchase and installation of a fiberglass pole from ICS for the lump sum amount of \$40,809.20. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Kincannon with all Commissioners present voting in favor of the motion.

15. Approval of a proposal received from The Goodman Corporation for preparation of the 2026 PIDP Grant Application.

Mr. Miura stated that staff met with the Finance Committee on March 24 which favorably recommended approval. Mr. Miura explained that the port submitted a Port Infrastructure Development Program Grant Application in 2025 that was for the Velasco Terminal Area 4 project. Staff has been advised that the PIDP26 deadline has been moved to June 26 of this year. Staff is recommending the port engage the Goodman Corporation to prepare the 2026 application and in the event the port's 2025 application is not awarded, staff would resubmit the same application for 2026, updated with information received from MARAD through a debrief. Mr. Miura further explained that if the port's 2025 application is awarded, staff would then submit a new grant application prepared by Goodman. Staff recommends the port engage the Goodman Corporation to prepare the application for PIDP26. Mr. Miura noted that the proposal amount for preparation of a new application is \$49,750.00 and if the application is resubmitted, the amount will be \$25,000.

A motion was made by Commissioner Croft to approve a proposal received from the Goodman Corporation for the preparation of the 2026 PIDP grant application for an amount up to \$49,750.00. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Fratila with all Commissioners present voting in favor of the motion.

16. Approval of a Resolution Authorizing an advance Funding Agreement with the Texas Department of Transportation for USDOT Rural Surface Transportation Grant for non-TWIC Truck Queuing Area Improvements.

A motion was made by Commissioner Santos to table this item. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Fratila with all Commissioners present voting in favor of the motion.

17. Approval of a Resolution Authorizing Participation in The Interlocal Purchasing System.

Ms. O'Brien stated that the port's new procurement manager discovered a purchasing program called TIPS (The Interlocal Purchasing System) that is a national cooperative purchasing program offered by the Region 8 Education Center of Texas. She explained that the program is similar to other purchasing cooperatives the port currently participates in, such as BuyBoard and Texas DIR. Staff recommends approval of the resolution that authorizes the port's participation in TIPS and also authorizes the Executive Director/CEO or her designee to execute the agreement, both of which have been reviewed by legal counsel. Ms. O'Brien added that the more cooperatives the port is a part of, the more resources it has available to shop for the best price to save the port the most money. Commissioner Croft commented that he is familiar with TIPS noting that it's a good resource for locals to have opportunities to do business with the ports. Commissioner Santos commented that he is also familiar with the program stating that it's very advantageous to the port to see what's priced already, see where you're at and get things a lot quicker, noting that another good program is Choice Partners.

A motion was made by Commissioner Santos to approve the resolution authorizing participation with the interlocal purchasing systems named TIPS. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Croft with all Commissioners present voting in favor of the motion.

18. EXECUTIVE SESSION in accordance with Subchapter D of the Open Meetings Act, Texas Government Code Section 551.001, et. seq., to review and consider the following:

A. Under authority of Section 551.071 (Consultation with Attorney) for discussion regarding:

1. Consultation with attorney under Government Code Section 551.071(1) (to seek or receive attorney's advice on pending or contemplated litigation).
2. Consultation with attorney under Government Code Section 551.071(2) (to seek or receive attorney's advice on legal matters that are not related to litigation).

B. Under authority of Section 551.076 (Deliberation of Security Matters):

1. Discussion regarding issues related to the deployment, or specific occasions for implementation of security personnel or devices or security audit and services.

C. Under authority of Section 551.087 (Economic Development Negotiations or Incentives):

1. To discuss or deliberate regarding commercial or financial information that the governmental body has received from a business prospect that the governmental body seeks to have locate, stay, or expand in or near the territory of the governmental body and with which the governmental body is conducting economic development negotiations.
 - i. Business and Economic Development Report including potential offers of financial or other incentives to the business prospect.
2. To deliberate the offer of a financial or other incentive to a business prospect described by Subdivision (1).

D. Under authority of Section 551.072 (Deliberation Concerning Real Property Matters) for discussion regarding:

1. The potential purchase, exchange, lease, or value of real property located at Port Freeport, including but not limited to the real property located at and contiguous to Berths 1, 2, 3, 5, 7 and 8.
2. The potential lease or value of real property located at Port Freeport or adjacent to Port Freeport, including but not limited to Parcel 1.
3. The potential exchange, lease, or value of real property located at Port Freeport, including but not limited to Parcels 14, 19, 25, 27, 30, 31, 34 and property on Quintana Island.

E. Under authority of Section 551.074 (Deliberation of Personnel Matters) for discussion regarding:

1. Deliberation regarding the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties of a public officer or employee, including but not limited to: Director of Information Technology.

19. RECONVENED OPEN SESSION:

20. Affirm pay increase for Director of Information Technology.

Mr. Lowe stated that I would like to make a recommendation to the board to affirm a pay increase for the Director of Information Technology as presented to the Port Commission, effective the beginning of the next pay cycle.

A motion was made by Commissioner Kincannon to approve the recommendation. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Fratila with all Commissioners present voting in favor of the motion.

21. Adjourn.

With no further business before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 5:45 PM.